

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 YAOUND 00545 121117Z

43

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 IGA-02 ACDA-05 AID-05 OMB-01

TRSE-00 L-03 MC-02 /070 W

----- 047945

R 121040Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7770

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L YAOUNDE 0545

E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PFOR, XA, CM

SUBJ: REGIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT STUDY

REF: STATE 20621

1. SUMMARY: LIVING WITH NORMAL BUDGETARY RESTRAINTS, CAMEROON MAINTAINS MODEST ARMED FORCES WITHOUT SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS. GURC AND CAMEROONIAN MILITARY LEADERS SEEM PRAGMATIC ENOUGH TO REALIZE THIS REAL-WORLD SITUATION WILL CONTINUE, AND THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THUS FAR OF STRONG DESIRE OR PRESSURES TO INTRODUCE MAJOR QUALITATIVE CHANGE IN AVAILABLE WEAPONRY. WITH NATURAL CONCERNS ABOUT SEVERAL OF ITS NEIGHBORS, CAMEROON WOULD PRESUMABLY WELCOME REGIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT ARRANGEMENT. EMBASSY JUDGES GURC WOULD LIKELY WANT SUCH ARRANGEMENT UNDER OAU AEGIS, WITH APPROPRIATE COOPERATION FROM NON-AFRICAN POWERS. USG WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE ONE SUCH POWER, BUT ONLY ONE AMONG SEVERAL OR EVEN MANY. END SUMMARY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 YAOUND 00545 121117Z

2. CAMEROONIAN POLICY AND ACTIONS IN VIRTUALLY ALL DOMAINS --

INCLUDING MILITARY -- ARE PRAGMATIC, REALISTIC AND CAUTIOUS. CAMEROON MAINTAINS ARMY OF ABOUT 6000, GENDARMERIE OF 4-5000, AND SMALL NAVY AND AIR FORCE OF ABOUT 300 MEN EACH. BY AFRICAN STANDARDS, CAMEROONIAN FORCES ENJOY VERY GOOD LEADERSHIP AND ARE WELL ORGANIZED AND WELL TRAINED. EQUIPMENT, WHICH COMES FROM FRANCE AND NUMBER OF OTHER COUNTRIES, IS MODEST. NO TANKS, MISSILES, ROCKETS OR JET FIGHTERS. ARMY AND GENDARMERIE HAVE ARMORED CARS, AIR FORCE HAS FOUR MAGISTER JET TRAINERS, AND NAVY HAS SEVERAL SMALL COASTAL PATROL CRAFTS. ABOUT 100 FRENCH OFFICERS AND NON-COMS ARE ATTACHED TO CAMEROONIAN ARMED FORCES UNDER FRANCE'S MILITARY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, BUT NONE HOLD COMMAND POSITIONS. ORGANIZATION OF ARMED FORCES MINISTRY, THE SEVERAL SERVICES AND MILITARY SECTOR COMMANDS, AND JUDICIOUS SELECTION OF CIVILIAN AS WELL AS MILITARY PERSONNEL FOR KEY ARMED FORCES POSITIONS ARE PART OF CAREFULLY DESIGNED SCHEME TO KEEP MILITARY IN ITS PLACE.

3. CAMEROONIAN ARMED FORCES HAVE HISTORY OF SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN AGAINST COMMUNIST-SUPPORTED UPC INSURGENCY IN LATE 1950'S AND THROUGH 1960'S. THIS PAST SITUATION AND CONSTANT EFFORT TO REMAIN ALERT AGAINST RECURRENCE ORIENTS CAMEROONIAN MILITARY TO INTERNAL SECURITY AS PRIME CONCERN, ALTHOUGH WITH PRESENCE OF LEFTIST EQUATORIAL GUINEA AND CONGO ON SOUTHERN BORDERS PROTECTION AGAINST INVASION/INFILTRATION IS ALSO IMPORTANT MISSION. ALSO, NIGERIAN COLOSSUS TO WEST IS ALWAYS LOOKED AT WITH MEASURE OF CONCERN.

4. BUDGETARY RESTRAINTS ARE REAL, WITH CAMEROON ALREADY DEVOTING 11 PERCENT OF ITS BUDGET TO DEFENSE DESPITE LACK OF SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS AND MODERATE SIZE OF FORCES. MILITARY UNDERSTANDABLY WOULD LIKE MORE AND BETTER WEAPONRY, BUT WE AWARE OF NO UNDUE PRESSURES ON GURC IN THIS DIRECTION. IF BUDGETARY RESTRAINTS WERE REMOVED OR WEAPONS FREE, CAMEROON MIGHT WELL WISH TO GEAR UP ITS FORCES TO MORE SOPHISTICATED LEVEL TO ADD MEASURE OF SECURITY VIS-A-VIS ITS NEIGHBORS.

5. SINCE CAMEROON FOLLOWING POLICY OF RESTRAINT ANYWAY, IT WOULD PRESUMABLY WELCOME RESTRAINT BY OTHERS, EITHER UNILATERALLY OR IN FRAMEWORK OF SOME SORT OF MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT. GURC WOULD GO INTO ANY SUCH ARRANGEMENT WITH EYES OPEN AND IN REALIZATION

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 YAOUND 00545 121117Z

THAT PARTICULAR AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND THEIR EXTRA-CONTINENTAL FRIENDS MIGHT SUBTLY STRETCH OR BLUNTLY VIOLATE TERMS OF AGREEMENT IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT ARRANGEMENT WOULD BE ESSENTIALLY COSTLESS FOR CAMEROON IN PRESENT AND FORESEEABLE CIRCUMSTANCES. CAMEROON WOULD LIKELY WANT TO SEE SUCH ARRANGEMENT UNDER STRONGEST POSSIBLE OAU UMBRELLA, AND WOULD PRESUMABLY WELCOME OUTSIDE POWERS, INCLUDING US, COOPERATING IN SOME APPROPRIATE WAY. CONSIDERING RECENT HISTORY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND ANGOLA --

AND USG'S MANIFEST INTERNAL OPERATING DIFFICULTIES -- GURC WOULD
HARDLY LOOK TO US AS ANY SPECIAL KIND OF GUARANTOR. IN BRIEF,
FROM GURC PERSPECTIVE, INITIATIVE FOR ARMS RESTRAINT ARRANGEMENT
SHOULD BE OR AT LEAST APPEAR TO BE INDIGENOUSLY AFRICAN, MODAL-
ITIES WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT PRIMARILY BY AFRICANS, AND USG
WOULD LIKELY BE WELCOMED AS ONE RPT ONE OF MANY COOPERATING
OUTSIDERS.
SPIRO

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMS, CONVENTIONAL WARFARE, STUDIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976YAOUND00545
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760054-0180
From: YAOUNDE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760253/aaaabulg.tel
Line Count: 123
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 20621
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 APR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <10 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REGIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT STUDY
TAGS: MILI, PFOR, XA, CM
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006